

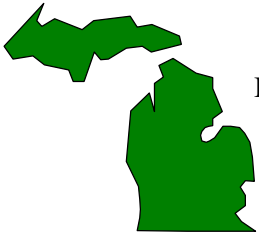
# Michigan Child Care Matters



MICHIGAN FAMILY INDEPENDENCE AGENCY  
Office of Children and Adult Licensing  
Division of Child Day Care Licensing

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Issue 66, Winter 2004



## Division Update

In the last issue of Michigan Child Care Matters, I shared Kristen McDonald-Stone's article discussing the child care center rule that went into effect on September 1, 2003.

There are some other aspects to this rule that I would like to highlight for you. On a daily basis, all centers must provide:

- ✦ Quiet and active activities.
- ✦ Individual, small group, and large group activities.
- ✦ Large and small muscle activities.
- ✦ Child initiated and staff initiated activities.
- ✦ Not less than 30 minutes of developmentally appropriate emergent literacy activities.

All licensing consultants have participated in a one-day training, developed and presented by the Department of Education, on "Language and Literacy Goals for Young Children." It provided Child Day Care Licensing Consultants with some guidelines for assessing compliance with this rule. The information in this training reinforced what many of us already knew: Centers offering a well planned, child-centered program with a variety of age-appropriate equipment are probably already complying with this rule.

How can you assure your center is meeting the requirements of this rule? Plan your program in advance. Make sure your activities are developmentally appropriate for the children in your care. Allow time each day for children to play individually, in small and large groups. Make use of learning/activity centers, including dramatic play, reading, art, music, blocks, and manipulatives.

When reading with children, make it fun! Provide opportunities for children to listen to and tell oral stories, and "read" from text. Allow children to participate as active learners in the reading experience. Ask questions about the story; see if they can guess what is

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going to happen next. Add drama to your voice as you read the story. Take your time reading the story. Pause now and then so that children have time to take the story's meaning in. Read stories over and over. They enjoy hearing favorite stories, and it takes a long time before children tire of a good story.

There are many other ways you can begin to create a literate environment for the children in your care. Label objects in the room and on the shelves or bins where the children's equipment is stored. Play rhyming games with children. Talk with children throughout the day. And, just as importantly, allow children the opportunity to talk with you by listening to them, and waiting for them to finish their sentences without interrupting them.

Our goal in revising this rule is to help children in all aspects of language: reading, writing, speaking, and listening. There is help available if you need assistance with your program. Many of the local 4C offices offer training on emergent literacy.

Jim Sinnamon



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## Infant - Caregiver Interaction

Judy Miller, Child Day Care Licensing Consultant  
Kent County

Did you know that the human brain is capable of learning *before* birth? The first four years – from conception to just past the third birthday – are the most critical period of development. That means that the most important learning takes place before a child even gets to preschool! Also, this intense period of brain growth and development can happen only once in a lifetime.

At birth, a baby has all of the brain cells that s/he will ever have. However, these brain cells are not very well connected, and do not communicate well with one another. When a baby experiences something new, *synapses* (brain cell connections) develop. The development of these connections and interconnections – like a complex circuit – is necessary for later learning. The more stimulating experiences that a caregiver can give a baby, the more “circuitry” is built for later learning. Babies need to experience a variety of interesting sights, sounds, textures, tastes, and smells.

Does all of this mean that caregivers should plan and implement complicated curriculum for babies? The answer is an emphatic NO! The best thing that you can give to the infants in your care is YOU.

The human infant is very well adapted to respond to other human beings. For example, newborn babies can see very well if an object is 8 – 12 inches away. This is the distance that a caregiver’s face is from a baby during breast or bottle-feeding. What a wonderful time to talk or sing to a baby, and provide some high quality stimulation because babies prefer to look at high contrast patterns and faces. Babies respond best to the sound of human voice and to music. Research has shown that babies can remember sounds that they heard before they were born.

Remember that babies need the security of a consistent, responsive, and loving caregiver as much as they need stimulating experiences. So, just love the baby. Never deny him or her your tender affection. Interactions with trusted caregivers are as necessary to the baby as food.



What else can you do?

**Talk to the baby** often with a kind voice, a wide range of vocabulary, and a lot of expression. Sing, too. Remember that babies are not music critics!

**Respond** to the baby’s cries without hesitation. This teaches that s/he can communicate with other people and gives him/her a strong sense of trust and emotional stability.

**Touch the baby.** Of all of the sensory experiences, it is touch that most communicates love. Research has found that babies who are massaged daily develop movement earlier, sleep more soundly, and have less colic.

**Let the baby experience** different environments: go for walks every day.

**Read books.** Even though a baby can’t follow the story, s/he loves the pictures and the sound of your voice. This contributes to language development.

**Play music.** There is some evidence that classical music can stimulate the same cells in the brain that are later used for mathematics. Babies will respond, however, to all types of music, especially if the caregiver sings and dances along. ♪ ♪



## “Me do it”

Judy Gaspar, Child Day Care Licensing Consultant  
Kalamazoo County

Toddlers’ physical activity and mental activity tell us that they “are on the move!” Toddlers are about walking and talking. “Me do it!” How can caregivers guide such exuberant behavior? How can caregivers prevent the power struggles between the toddler and the adult? How can caregivers prevent normal behavior from becoming “issues”?

A developmental approach helps caregivers understand and anticipate toddlers’ behavior. For example, the following chart gives the developmental stage and a possible complementary approach.

| <i>Developmental stage</i> | <i>Possible approach</i>  |
|----------------------------|---|
| “Me”                       | Provide plenty of space to move about.<br>Limit group size to 8 to 12 toddlers.   |
| Can’t really recall        | Show (not tell) desired behavior.<br>Show calmness.<br>Use a quiet voice.   |
| Unable to share            | Have duplicates of popular toys.  |
| Unable to wait patiently   | Plan and prepare activities beforehand.<br>Keep them involved.  |
| Have wide mood swings      | Use soothing techniques.<br>Be warm and caring.<br>Use soft music.<br>Use chanting and singing.<br>Show a gentle touch. |

Because of their developmental stage and characteristics, toddlers respond to these *simple techniques*. Learn to: Distract them. Divert them to another activity. Redirect them to another area.

Help toddlers to learn words and to develop comprehension. Grooming and health care moments can be learning times. This is a one-on-one time when the caregiver can give simple words for the activity and help the child build vocabulary. For example, “now I am changing your wet diaper;” “now we are washing our hands;” “now we’re going back to the room.”

These simple statements form a link between the action and the words. This is how the toddler will learn the connections and learn words and eventually respond to words and learn to “use your words.”

**Success** in guiding toddlers “on the move” comes from the following preparation:

- ✍ Recognize typical behavior
- ✍ Form realistic expectations
- ✍ Plan the environment
- ✍ Develop effective strategies

**Consistency** is a key component to effective strategies. Provide:

- ✍ Consistency in the day’s sequence of activities
- ✍ Consistency in responses to similar events
- ✍ Consistency from caregiver to caregiver
- ✍ Consistency in having the same caregiver day to day

If possible, **involve parents** in a partnership of guiding their children. All providers develop written discipline policies and distribute them to parents. Invite parents to participate in a common approach. Assist them in understanding the toddler and his/her stage of development.

“Me do it” time does not last a long time. Treasure it while it is here. ✍

## Talk, Talk, Talk: Empowering Toddlers to Speak

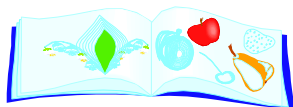
Alexandra Grabbe  
Early Childhood News, May/June 1998  
Reprinted with permission

### Making the Early Years Count

*During their early years, children master language skills, learn about the world through play, and rely on parents and caregivers to meet their basic needs. Rapid brain development occurs, and the foundation is laid for the person a child will grow to be. The following articles will help you deliver the special care infants and toddlers require during this crucial period of development. These early years are short, so make them count!*

Toddler teachers often suggest that young children “use their words” to communicate what they are feeling. But in order to be able to use their words, toddlers must possess language. In order to possess language, they must hear words. Early childhood professionals are lucky to be able to present toddlers with wonderful new tools for expression – simple words of one or two syllables can be shared easily with a healthy dose of tender loving care. But how should a teacher proceed?

- ? Talk, talk, talk. Talk until you are blue in the face. Speak clearly and enunciate. Repeat everything toddlers say and offer positive reinforcement when a child succeeds in “owning” a new word. Empower children by creating an environment rich in words. Think of verbs, nouns, and adjectives as the building blocks for language acquisition. If you feel hoarse at the end of the day, know that you are doing something right.
- ? Read simple books to children. Don’t just stick to the text, especially if you are working with a group of young toddlers. Talk about what is portrayed in the illustrations. Ask toddlers what they see, and then provide answers. Don’t be afraid of repeating yourself.

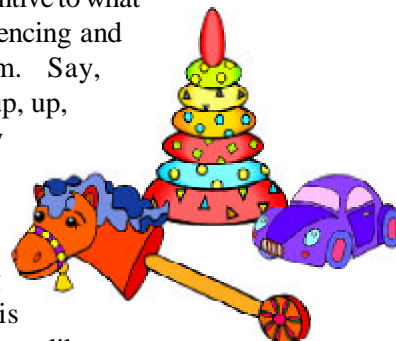


Children need to hear words many times before they feel secure enough to attempt to use them.

- ? Sing songs even if no one sings along. The repetition of the lyrics and the rhymes will facilitate the

learning of individual words. Parents may soon report that their children sing favorite tunes at home.

- ? During play, be attentive to what children are experiencing and describe it to them. Say, “Alex is climbing up, up, up. Look at how high he is now. Alex has reached the top of the slide. Now he is sliding DOWN...” This play-by-play may seem like overkill at first, but it is an active way of providing words to the child.



As the days go by, you may feel as if you are conducting a monologue, but don’t think the method isn’t working. The children may not be responding, but they are listening. When talking or reading, watch for their bodies to become still and their heads to bend ever so slightly. A concentrated look of wonder may light up their faces. No doubt about it – your words are being absorbed.

You may not see immediate results, but after a while parents will begin commenting that they have noticed a change at home: “It’s great now that Cooper is using a few words rather than ugh, ugh, ugh,” said one mother. You can tell her that her 15-month-old son always climbs into the lap of a caregiver during

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storytime. He listens carefully and registers what he hears. Soon he will be talking up a storm.

Twenty-month-old Luciana chatters away in baby talk which frustrates teachers who cannot understand what she is saying; Luciana hears only Spanish at home. She is unable to sit still during story time, but does listen attentively when caregivers speak to her in English while changing her diapers. Luciana's mother reports with delight that her daughter now uses some English words correctly.

Little children are like parrots – they repeat everything they hear. Although your toddlers may not be speaking clearly, they are busy stockpiling words. One day they will burst into speech. Development of basic vocabulary will continue throughout their preschool years.

Observing the progress of toddlers as they begin to speak is an exciting adventure. I remember how thrilled the teachers at my center were when 21-month-old Jennifer linked two words together at snack. Instead of her usual request for more, Jen said, “mo-were wa-ter” when she became thirsty. Fireworks went off that day.

Make fireworks go off in your classroom, too. Provide the tools, which will allow toddlers to speak. By using language efficiently, regularly, and enthusiastically, you can make a difference in the lives of the children entrusted to your care. ✍

*Alexandra Grabbe started working with toddlers 30 years ago at the Vassar College Nursery School. She is now caring for her elderly parents on Cape Cod.*

## Child Day Care Forms

All forms and publications provided by the Office of Children and Adult Licensing are also available on our website, [www.michigan.gov/fia](http://www.michigan.gov/fia). Please note that all form number identifiers located in the lower left hand corner or on the back of publications, formerly BRS, will now be identified with OCAL. The “Child In Care Statement” and “Medication Permission” forms are only available on-line. A copy of the Forms Request Order Form is also available on-line should you need to request forms or publications from the Family Independence Agency, Office of Children and Adult Licensing. Frequently used forms that may be ordered from the Office of Children and Adult Licensing include the Child Information Card; Incident, Accident, Illness, Death form; Licensing Rules for Child Care Center publication and Licensing Rules for Family and Group Home publication. If you need Health Appraisal forms, please contact the Department of Community Health, Jacquelyn Perigo at 517-335-9387, fax 517-335-9855 or email her at [perigoj@michigan.gov](mailto:perigoj@michigan.gov).

It is important to accurately and completely fill out the Forms Request Order form with facility name, name of requestor, physical location address (no Post Office Box numbers), city and zip, telephone number, license number and licensed capacity. Forms and publications are available in quantities no larger than double the licensed capacity.

This publication provides topical information regarding young children who are cared for in licensed child care settings. We encourage child care providers to make this publication available to parents of children in care, or to provide them with the web address so they may receive their own copy. Issue 43 and beyond are available on the internet. **This document is in the public domain and we encourage reprinting.**

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# Emergent Literacy

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**What is emergent literacy?** The definition of literacy has changed so much with changes in our world and the development of technology. The emergent literacy perspective looks at children's learning from birth on, as a foundation for all development and education (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). Children are all at different points of developing skills associated with literacy: *oral language, reading, listening, and writing*. All children are in the process of becoming literate.

Viewing children as competent learners means that there are no pre-readers or pre-writers. Instead, children are working on early reading by telling the story from pictures and following the words on a page with their finger. Children are early writers when they scribble on a paper and tell us what it 'says'. Emergent literacy focuses on what children can do already, rather than what they can't yet accomplish. It focuses on the next steps of development instead of what a child can't do alone.

The development of children's oral language, reading, listening, and writing is interrelated, not sequential (Teale & Sulzby, 1986). This complements what we already know about children's development: growth in one area influences the others. For example, if a child does not feel safe or comfortable (emotional development), it is difficult for them to learn their colors, shapes, numbers, or to write their name (cognitive development).

## What can I do with young children to help their emergent literacy?

*Talk, talk, talk to each child (and listen).* Children need to hear language at all ages. You are helping them to build the foundation for their lifelong learning. Responding to a child helps them understand that they are important, powerful communicators. Speaking to a child allows him/her to hear the spoken language and begin to make sense of it.

There are two parts of language: expressive and receptive language. Receptive language develops ear-

lier. It is the ability to understand what is said. This is why a young toddler can understand 'it's time to wash your hands'. The child may start to head over to the sink, or reach for the soap. We encourage receptive language by speaking to children and giving them time to respond to requests. We also encourage this language by praising and getting excited when a child responds to our request.

Expressive language develops next. Expressive language is the sounds and words a child uses. We encourage children's expressive language by asking them to 'use their words', by patiently waiting for a child to respond. We see children's expressive language when a baby babbles back to an adult, and we get excited about it. This tells children we want them to try it again and again!

*Sort, seriate, and order.* Did you know that classification, sorting things by category, is an important early literacy skill? Children need to be able to tell the difference in things such as colors, shapes, and sizes before they are able to notice differences in letters and numbers. Think about how similar these letters appear: p, d, b, q. There are many sounds that are similar such as the /b/, /p/ sounds. As children have more experience with things such as shapes and sounds, they are able to tell the difference between them.



Children need lots of practice sorting things and figuring out what is the same or different. The old adage is definitely true, practice makes perfect. This is why repetition is important in working with young children. They gain something new with each practice or time they try something out. In play, children first explore what something can do; what ways a toy can move, how words can be manipulated (rhymes), what properties an object has. After a child explores an

*“Emergent literacy focuses on what children can do already, rather than what they can’t yet accomplish.”*

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object/word/ book, the child can then begin to use the object/word/book as a tool for learning. Just as it takes time and practice to learn how to drive a car, it takes time to master new skills.

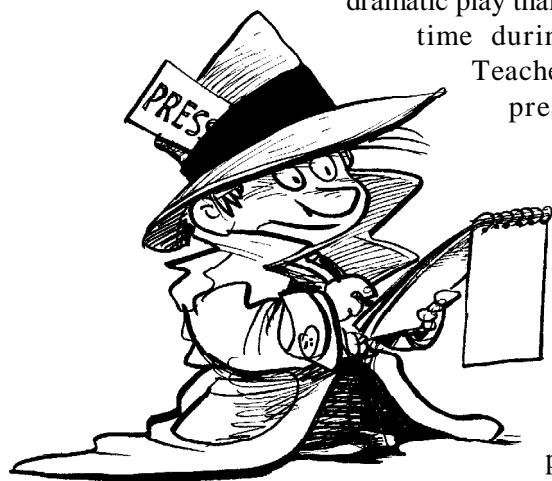
*Tell me a story!* Books are very important on the road to a child's emergent literacy. Books can be read with children from a very early age. Having a routine



of reading teaches children that reading is important and valuable. But...telling stories aloud is just as powerful in expanding children's attention span and vocabulary. Stories could be real or ones that are made up. The effect is the same, a valuable oral language experience that has the same components as a book.

*I'll be the Mom and you be the baby.* Dramatic play, pretending to play house, veterinarian, or office, helps children to develop story lines (like a play or a book). There are characters, a setting, there is interaction and conversation, and (as children get older) there is a plot. Dramatic play is a very concrete way of expressing a story, because children are acting it out physically. Research has shown that children use the most developed vocabulary and sentence structure in dramatic play than at any other time during the day.

Teachers can help preschool children by offering to dictate what is going on, showing children the written story of their play. Writing is an abstract



concept, but this is a great way to show children the connection between play and the written word.

*Show me the way.* Adults that point out words at the grocery store or around town help children to see that literacy is all around us. Children that see adults reading for their own pleasure can identify this as im-

portant in life. Children that have access to writing materials can imitate the writing they see adults doing: making grocery lists, writing letters to a friend, writing a paper for school. Young children follow the examples they see all around them. If adults are participating in literate types of activities, children will be more interested in trying them too. They want to do things like people who are important to them: their family, their teachers, etc.

It's never too late to begin establishing good habits that can last a lifetime. There are many resources available through the public library or the U.S. Department of Education that may be helpful, as well as free. Some titles available free of charge at [www.edpubs.org](http://www.edpubs.org) are: *Helping your Child Become A Reader*, *A Child Becomes a Reader*, *Putting Reading First*, *Teaching Our Youngest: A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child Care and Family Providers*, *Satellite Town Meeting #88: Early Childhood Education: Ready to Learn*, *Guide for Parents: How do I know a good early reading program when I see one?* and *Helping your Preschool Child*. Two great websites with lots of information for families as well as teachers are: [www.teachmorelovemore.org](http://www.teachmorelovemore.org) and [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org).



# 10 Strategies To Enhance Language Development and Communication

*Laurie Nickson, Education Consultant, Michigan Dept. of Education  
Michigan Association for the Education of Young Children*

1. **Be responsive when children initiate communication.** Prompt, appropriate responses teach infants the power of their early messages and motivate them to keep communicating. As compared with conversations started by their caregivers, conversation initiated by young children last longer, are richer in information, and are more complex. (Bloom et al., 1996).

2. **Engage in verbal and nonverbal communication.** For example, a child will more readily learn the name of an object if we look at it when we say its name. (Baldwin, Markman, Bill, Desjardines, Irwin & Tidball, 1996).

3. **Use child-directed language.** Adapting communication to the infant's level is key in bathing the child in language. Ways we make language understandable for infants include: slow rate of speech, higher than normal pitch, repetition, speech with a singsong quality, clear pronunciation, short sentences, grammatically simple sentences, simple words.

4. **Use self-talk and parallel talk.** Self-talk refers to describing to the infant your own actions as you do them; this technique works especially well during care giving routines. Parallel talk means describing the child's action or behavior. Both self-talk and parallel talk helps infants connect actions and sensory experiences with language.

5. **Help children expand language.** For young infants, expanding their language often involves noticing what the child is pointing at and telling the child its name. When children start to use words, we can add to what they say and model correct language. Expansion works best if we simply model correct language, rather than pointing out mistakes. We can also expand language by asking children questions and by describing things in a way that invites children to ask questions. The most successful expansions build on the child's focus of interest. Communication that connects with a child's thought or idea is what makes language meaningful and exciting.

6. **Support bilingual development.** Young children who are learning two languages may learn one faster than the other and at certain points in development may mix the two languages.

7. **Attend to individual development and needs.** Whether learning one language or two, most children master language at their own pace. Some children use new words almost daily. Other children may just listen for months and, when they start to talk, may use full sentences right away. Finding ways to adapt to each child's unique learning style is at the heart of enhancing language development.

8. **Engage infants with books and stories.** Infants and toddlers who have rich experiences with books and stories often have an easier time learning to read when they reach school age. The key to engaging infants in books and stories is both to make it fun and to let the children be involved.

9. **Be playful with language.** Rhyming games, finger play, songs, and pretend play give infants and toddlers a rich exposure to language. The rhythm and repetition of a rhyme or song help infants and toddlers learn to communicate. The language they use in pretend play is often more advanced than the language they use at other times. By playing along, caregivers can give children important opportunities to experiment and be creative with language.

10. **Create a communication friendly environment.** Provide a calm, quiet environment as it may be difficult for some children to filter out background noise. Large groups, constant music, and television may be distracting. Children enjoy seeing interesting and familiar things that they can talk about, such as pictures of families displayed at their eye level. ✍ ✍



# News From FIA

## Infant/Toddler Caregiver Training (I/TC)



The Program for Infant/Toddler Caregivers (PITC) developed by the nonprofit research, development, and service agency, WestEd, in collaboration with the California Department of Education was selected by the National Center for Children in Poverty as a model initiative for the support of infants, toddlers, and their families.

“Good infant care is neither baby-sitting nor preschool. It is a special kind of care that resembles no other.”

The PITC approach equates good care with trained caregivers that are preparing themselves and the environment so those infants can learn. For care to be good, it must explore ways to help caregivers get “in tune” with each infant they serve and learn from the individual infant what he or she needs, thinks, and feels.

“We believe infant care should be based on relationship planning - not lesson planning - and should emphasize child-directed learning over adult-directed learning. Rather than detailing specific lessons for caregivers to conduct with infants, the PITC approach shows caregivers ways of helping infants learn the lessons that every infant comes into the world eager to learn.” [www.pitc.org/pub/pitcdocs/about.html](http://www.pitc.org/pub/pitcdocs/about.html)

With this in mind, the Michigan Family Independence Agency’s Child Development and Care Division, in collaboration with Head Start - State Collaboration Program, Michigan Association for the Education of Youth Children and the Michigan 4C Association developed three training sections based on the WestEd, PITC curriculum. Offered in three training sections, “Part A: Overview of Developmentally Appropriate Practices.” “Part B: Social Emotional Growth & Socialization and Group Care,” and “Part C: Learning & Development and Culture, Families and

Providers.” This curriculum is hosted regionally around Michigan and is **free** to infant and toddler caregivers.

To receive additional information or be placed on the mailing list for the TC training, brochure, contact Shannon Pavwoski at (517) 373-2492 or via email (preferred) [pavwoskis@michigan.gov](mailto:pavwoskis@michigan.gov).

## Are You Running An After-School Program?

Funding is available through the Child and Adult Care Food Program to pay for an evening meal for children age 18 and under. The meal can be served at any point during the afterschool program, and can be as simple as a turkey sandwich, an apple, some carrot sticks, and milk. You can even serve a supper and a snack as long as there are three hours in between each meal service. The funding is based upon the number of children you serve and increases as your afterschool program grows. For each child that receives a supper and a snack during the course of the school year, you would receive approximately \$530. If 30 children attend your program, you would be reimbursed nearly \$16,000 for food and administrative costs.

To qualify, the afterschool program must be located in a low-income area where the local school has 50 percent or more of its students eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. Family and group child care homes are not eligible to participate. Programs must be licensed or license exempt according to Michigan licensing law (Act 116, Public Acts of 1973, as amended) in order to participate. For more information, contact the Michigan Department of Education at (517) 373-7391.

## Attention Providers

Due to budget constraints, the Family Independence Agency is eliminating payment for overtime care. Beginning October 5, 2003, the maximum care hours that may be authorized, reported or paid is full-time or 100 hours per two-week pay period.

## The Shy Child

Sharon Schleicher, Child Day Care Licensing Consultant  
Washtenaw County

It is easy to identify the outgoing, active children; but what about those so-called “invisible” youngsters who are timid and afraid of being noticed? The following information may assist anyone who has ever parented or worked with a shy child.

### What is Shyness?

Shyness is a personality trait, not a fault. Researchers indicate both nurture and nature contribute to shyness. Shyness is felt as a mix of emotions, including fear and interest, tension and pleasantness. It can be a normal response to an overwhelming social experience. By being somewhat shy, children can withdraw temporarily and gain a sense of control. Younger children may exhibit shyness by sucking their thumbs, acting coy, or alternately smiling and pulling away.

### When is Shyness a Problem?

In some children, shyness is a response to inner problems, not inner peace. This child withdraws, avoids eye-to-eye contact and has a lot of behavioral problems. Some children have poor self-images or may lack the social skills required to make friends. This can cause them to be neglected by their peers, and have few chances to develop social skills. These children may need intervention by caregivers and teachers to assist in their social development.

### How to Help a Shy Child

- ? First, are you sure the child really is shy? Some children like to size up a situation before they jump in. Caution should not be misunderstood as shyness.
- ? Don't call the child shy; studies have shown that often a child will grow to fit a label.
- ? Don't push the shy child; respect her need to stay back and move slowly.
- ? Shy children can blossom in the right environment, like your preschool or day care center.
- ? Continue to offer opportunities and suggestions for participation. Be patient, positive and persistent.
- ? Accept a reasonable level of shyness as a normal individual difference. Intervene only if shyness causes the child to have problems making friends, playing, or being involved in activities that she really wants to be involved in.

- ? Build self-esteem; reinforce shy children for demonstrating skills and encourage their autonomy. Praise them often.
- ? Start a game or activity together with the child. In a while, invite one or two other children to join, then quietly move away.
- ? Listen patiently. Encourage the child to talk about her fears, and try to empathize with her experience. You could add, “Feeling shy is tough, sometimes I feel shy too.”

### Positive Attributes of a Shy Child

Remember that shyness is not all bad. Not every child needs to be the focus of attention. Some qualities of shyness, such as modesty and reserve, are viewed as positive. Some shy children are deep-thinking and cautious. They are slow to warm up to strangers, often studying a person to see if the relationship is worth the effort.

Timid children may grow to be thoughtful and levelheaded adults who are cautious and think before acting. Shy children may become excellent observers of people and situations, be sensitive, caring, and compassionate, and able to understand others' feelings.

One parent described a conversation with her five year old son's teacher who had commented on what a shy boy he was. The parent responded, “Yes, he is reserved.” Another comment about how quiet the son was led the parent to respond, “Yes, he is very focused.” The teacher soon realized the parents viewed their son's traits as positive and, as the school year progressed, the teacher grew to respect this quiet, peaceful child who was a nice student to be around.

So, respect the child's nature as you work to help her feel more comfortable in social situations. ✍

# Teaching Positive Social Behavior

Jackie Sharkey, Child Day Care Licensing Consultant  
Macomb County

Parents, caregivers, and teachers play important roles in providing children the tools they need for positive social development. Learning to get along with others is not an innate developmental process. Children need to be taught empathy and the words to use with others when a conflict arises.

## Model the kind of behavior that you would like to see in children.

In order for children to learn empathy they need to experience empathy. Children can learn empathy when adults listen to them and then give feedback as to what the children are saying. Listening to them demonstrates the behavior that will teach children to listen to others when dealing with a conflict. Giving feedback teaches them the words to use with others.

Caregivers and teachers often use phrases such as, "Use your words," when children are upset or angry. Telling children to do something they have not been taught to do may produce an unexpected result. One teacher said to a child, "Use your words" when two children were arguing over a toy. One of the children turned to the other and said, "You poophead!" The child then turned to the teacher with a big smile on his face, he was so proud of himself. It is clearly necessary to give the children the appropriate tools they need to get along socially.

## To build empathy, teach children ways to express their feelings.

Teach children the words to use when trying to express their feelings. Give children the vocabulary to understand their own and others' feelings. Do not insist the children say, "I'm sorry" when they are not. We are telling them to express a feeling that they really do not feel. Instead, have the children figure out what would make the other child feel better. For example, a child who has hit another child could give the injured child a hug, or read him a book. Let the child decide how he wants to make the other child feel better.

## Monitor television viewing or video games.

Often, inappropriate television shows are viewed in the presence of children. Talk shows, soap op-

eras and even the news contain material that children are not ready to fully understand. Many cartoons are full of violence with a hero figure that is just as violent as the "bad guys". Teaching children about conflict resolution, empathy, and cooperation becomes difficult when that is not what our children see on television. Television shows or video games need to be monitored. When children do see inappropriate television shows, they need to be taught to be critical thinkers. Ask them, "What do you think would really happen if you got hit with a big sledgehammer? What are other ways the problem could have been solved?"

## Give immediate recognition for positive social behaviors.

Children are promptly told of unacceptable behaviors, while positive behaviors are neglected. Only teaching children the behaviors that are unacceptable does not teach children the behaviors that are expected. Notice positive social behaviors right away. The children will be more apt to continue those behaviors when they know they will get positive attention, for example, "Thank-you for hanging up your coat." "You played really well today. You must have had fun."

## Teach children to solve conflicts independently.

Do not solve conflicts for children. Children need to learn to handle conflicts on their own. Adults need to be there for guidance when children are faced with a negative situation, but they should not solve it for them. This only teaches the children to be dependent on the adult. ✍



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## How To Help the Troubled Child?

Dan Hodgins

Coordinator Child Development Program,  
Mott Community College, Flint

Working with a troubled child is the ultimate challenge to your abilities as a provider. This child does not respond to rewards, and may seem indifferent to consequences; he may even reject your compliments and seem intent on making enemies rather than friends. Confused, you will recognize that all of the techniques that you've used effectively with other children for years fail to reach this particular child. How to begin?

"You must dare to start over. Then you must be willing to see your approach fail, and to begin your search all over again. Therein lies the adventure of working with troubled children." Tobin, L. The Difficult Child.

He's violent, you say. Perhaps. But imagine what it takes for a child to strike an adult - his only source of survival. Imagine the depth of terror behind this action - imagine the depth of hurt. The hurt that troubled children create is never greater than the hurt they feel.

Each of us begins the day hoping to meet our basic needs. Besides the obvious requirements - food,

shelter and security - we also strive for companionship, acknowledgment, humor, and activity, and more. As adults, we understand that few of these needs must be met during the first hour of the day. We can wait to see friends until after work, eat later in the morning, feel the love of others throughout the day. Adults are able to delay their needs.

Troubled children, however, are unable to delay the fulfillment of basic needs. Lacking security in their lives, they struggle to meet essential needs as soon as possible. This struggle becomes a matter of survival to a degree most of us can hardly imagine. To a troubled child, nothing-certainly not math, reading or crafts - is more important than being reassured as early in the day as possible that he has food, friends, attention and encouragement.

All children come to school with unmet needs. Most have the ability to delay these needs. Troubled children focus on nothing else until these needs are met. Meet the needs early or consume your time fighting them.

The following is a summary of ten unmet needs and how to offer support within the first hour of each day:

| Situation  | Strategy   |
|--|--|
| <b>The Need for Acknowledgment</b> - the child who cannot wait for acknowledgment may pester for attention, he may appear lonely, lost in the crowd, he may withdraw or rebel.     | Who could the child check in with each morning? What morning responsibility would give importance to his presence? Is there an activity that would put the child in contact with at least one other child? |
| <b>The Need for Nutrition</b> - the child who is hungry may steal food, chew on objects such as pencils, may be irritable, tired.  | There is no remedy for a child's hunger other than to provide food. Provide the child with nutritious snacks often.  |
| <b>The Need for Communication</b> - the child who needs to tell his story by not being quiet may annoy you.  | Have the child write in a journal on difficult days, provide peer counselors, a short time in a classroom where he is free to speak with other children.   |
| <b>The Need for Socialization</b> - the child who has an unmet need for socialization may talk constantly, he may be isolated, not able to make friends, sets out to make enemies. | Which first hour activities could be done in pairs or small groups-even if only for selected children? Facilitate connections with other children.   |
| <b>The Need for Touch</b> - The child may be constantly touching other children and adults, poking and jabbing to provoke response, or sometimes fear being touched.               | Teach children to give hand and shoulder massages. Practice giving hugs, walking arm and arm, shaking hands. Include pets in the room or home.   |

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| Situation  | Strategy   |
|--|--|
| <b>The Need for Humor</b> - the child may become the class clown, or overly serious sometimes sadistic or sarcastic.   | There is healing power in laughter. Start the day with jokes or a funny story.   |
| <b>The Need for Physical Activity</b> - The child may appear to be sleepy or overactive, avoids activity.  | Start the day with stretching routines, or series of deep breathing exercises. Take short breaks, so children can move frequently.             |
| <b>The Need for Structure</b> - The child may constantly ask, "What do we do next?" He may be resistant to any change, chronically unprepared and appear to thrive on chaos. | Post and review schedules every day, inform children individually of any changes, follow routines consistently.                                |
| <b>The Need for Relaxation</b> - the child may appear withdrawn, exhausted, nervous, agitated.   | Provide books and tapes to teach relaxation skills, deep breathing before a stressful change, neck and shoulder stretching.                    |
| <b>The Need for Encouragement</b> - the child may seek constant reassurance, may be afraid to fail.  | Find time to ask these questions: What is it you like about yourself? How are you unique?, What do you do well?, How can you affect the world? |

If a child feels a need and is unable to express it, the absence of this natural response will become obvious. You may notice that he has no friends, doesn't like to play, or is afraid to laugh.

If a child no longer believes that others will fulfill his needs, you may be confused by the contradictory nature of what the child elicits from you and others. For example, unable to make friends, the child appears intent upon making enemies, or unable to experience structure and consistency in his life, he sets out to create hourly chaos. Troubled children are distinguished most clearly by the frustrated expression of needs. They actively elicit the opposite of what they really need.

There is no greater challenge than working with a troubled child. If you are willing to be creative, to risk, to try and fail and try again, working with a troubled child can teach you more, and touch you more than any other encounter. Don't give up, they need you. ✍

*"...working with a troubled child can teach you more, and touch you more than any other encounter."*



#### **Books:**

*62 Ways to Create Change in the Lives of Troubled Children* by L. Tobin.

*Kicking Your Stress Habits* by Donald Tubersing.

*Please Don't Sit on the Kids* by Clare Cherry.



## Resources: Social Development



Action Alliance for Children, (510) 444-7136,  
[aac@4children.org](mailto:aac@4children.org)

Bunnett, R., Friends at Work and Play, Redleaf Press,  
(800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

Copple, C., A World of Difference: Readings on Teaching Young Children in a Diverse Society, NAEYC Resources, (866) NAEYC-4U, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Creative Educational Video, Children at Work, Redleaf Press, (800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

Evans, B., You Can't Come to My Birthday Party: Conflict Resolutions with Young Children, Redleaf Press, (800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

Heidemann, S., Hewitt, D., Pathways to Play: Developing Play Skills in Young Children, Redleaf Press, (800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

High Scope Press, Supporting Young Children in Resolving Conflicts, Redleaf Press, (800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

Honig, A.S., Secure Relationships: Nurturing Infant/Toddler Attachment in Early Care Settings, NAEYC Resources, (866) NAEYC-4U, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Hyson and Van Trieste "The Shy Child," ERIC Digest, 1987

Katz, L., McClellan, D., Fostering Children's Social Competence: The Teacher's Role, NAEYC Resources, (866) NAEYC-4U, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Odom, S., Widening the Circle: Including Children with Disabilities in Preschool Programs, NAEYC Resources, (866) NAEYC-4U, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

Peters, Ruth A. "Dealing With A Shy Child", MSNBC News 2003

Rice, J., The Kindness Curriculum: Introducing Young Children to Loving Values, Redleaf Press, (800) 423-8309, [www.redleafpress.org](http://www.redleafpress.org)

Saifer, Steffen, Practical Solutions to Practically Every Problem, Redleaf Press, 1990

Stone, J., Building Classroom Community: The Early Childhood Teacher's Role, NAEYC Resources, (866) NAEYC-4U, [www.naeyc.org](http://www.naeyc.org)

### Coming Soon to a Mailbox Near You!

Governor Jennifer Granholm has recently asked that all licensed childcare facilities in Michigan provide at least 30 minutes per day of *developmentally appropriate emergent literacy activities*. For child care centers, this is now a licensing requirement. The Office of Children and Adult Licensing, Division of Child Day Care Licensing and an outreach team at Michigan State University are working to figure out what kind of support childcare providers need to implement this mandate. If you receive a survey from us about this, please take the time to complete and return it. We hope to send free children's books to all who do so!

## Consumer Product Safety Commission

### Infant/Child Product Recalls (not including toys)

- ✂ Graco Children's Products New Safety Instructions to Prevent Injuries with Portable Play Yards with Raised Changing Tables
- ✂ Sun Tech Enterprises Inc. Recall Baby Walkers
- ✂ Dorel Juvenile Group Inc. Extended Recall of Infant Car Seats/Carriers
- ✂ Babi Italia/LaJobi Industries Recall of Crib Drop-Side Rails
- ✂ Starbucks Recall of Children's Cups
- ✂ Baby's Dream Furniture Recall of Cribs
- ✂ Raymond Oak Inc. Recall of Toy Chests
- ✂ The First Years® Inc: New Safety Instructions to Prevent Injuries for Combo Baby Tubs/Step Stools
- ✂ Hufco-Delaware Company and Evenflo Company Inc. Recall of Portable Wood Cribs
- ✂ Baby Trend Recall to Repair Infant Swings Sold at Toys R Us
- ✂ Oriental International Trading Company Recall of Baby Walkers
- ✂ Bikepro, Inc. Recall of Baby Walkers
- ✂ XL Machine Ltd. Recall of Playskool Toy Chests Sold at Target
- ✂ Dorel Juvenile Group Recall of Repair Infant Car Seats/Carriers
- ✂ Vermont Precision Woodworks Recall of Cribs
- ✂ Fisher-Price Recall for In-Home Repair of Infant Swings
- ✂ Childcraft Education Recall of Changing Table with Steps
- ✂ L.A. Baby Recall of Folding Little Wood Cribs
- ✂ LaJobi Industries Crib Recall
- ✂ Evenflo Recall to Repair Home Décor Swing™ Wooden Baby Gates
- ✂ Dorel Juvenile Group Cosco Playpen Recall
- ✂ Kolcraft LiteSport Stroller Recall
- ✂ Fisher-Price Recall of Portable Bassinets
- ✂ Peg Perego USA Recall of High Chairs
- ✂ Century Recall of Multi-Use Strollers
- ✂ Changing Tables Recalled by Child Craft Industries
- ✂ Highchairs Recalled by Graco
- ✂ Cribs Recall/Repair by Simmons
- ✂ "Ranger" Strollers Recalled by Kolcraft
- ✂ Century Infant Car Seat/Carrier Recall
- ✂ "Le Cradle" Bassinets Recalled by Kids Line
- ✂ Baby Walkers Recalled by Safety 1st
- ✂ Gerry® TrailTech™ Backpack Baby Carriers Recalled by Hufco-Delaware
- ✂ Tot Wheels® Entertainer® Infant Walkers Recalled by Graco
- ✂ Graco Recall of Infant Swings
- ✂ Infant Carriers Recalled by Evenflo & Hufco-Delaware
- ✂ Crate & Barrel Recall of Children's Table
- ✂ Cosco Recall of Two Ways™ Tandem Strollers
- ✂ Regal + Lager Recall of "Baby Bjorn" Infant Carrier
- ✂ BRK Recall of First Alert True Fit Safety Gates
- ✂ Century Recall of Fold-N-Go? Care Centers
- ✂ NHTSA Recall of Evenflo On My Way Infant Car Seats/Carriers
- ✂ Graco Recall of Carriers and Carrier/Swing Seats
- ✂ MTS Products Recall of Infant Carriers
- ✂ BRK Recall of First Alert? True Fit Safety Gate
- ✂ Century Recall of Lil' Napper Infant Swings
- ✂ Coaster Company of America Recall of Baby Cribs
- ✂ Cosco Recall to Repair Quiet Time™ Infant Swings
- ✂ Little Tikes Cozy Highback Swing Recall
- ✂ Baby Trend Crib/Playpen Recall
- ✂ Gerry Recalls Some "Good Vibes" Infant Carriers
- ✂ The Little Tikes Company Recalls Little Tikes Crib Center Due To Lead Paint Hazard
- ✂ Century Products Recalls Wind-Up Infant Swings
- ✂ Childcraft Cribs With Loose Slats Recalled
- ✂ Three Baby Strollers Recalled By McCrory
- ✂ E-Z Go Strollers Recalled By Century
- ✂ Baby Cribs Recall by HBLA
- ✂ Infant Walkers Recalled by McCrory
- ✂ Li'l Steeler Strollers Recalled by Hedstrom
- ✂ Infant "Crib Cuddle" Recalled by Century & Product Source
- ✂ Infant Seat/Carriers Recalled by Pines
- ✂ Baby Back Carriers Recalled by Gerico
- ✂ Cribs Recalled by Questor
- ✂ Baby Car Seat/Stroller Recalled by Collier Keyworth

**Details on these product recalls may be obtained on the  
Consumer Product Safety Commission's website:  
[www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/child.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/cpscpub/prerel/category/child.html)**

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## Professional Development Opportunities

### Infant/Toddler Caregiver Training Series

#### Parts A & C

February 5-7, 2004; Kalamazoo, MI

#### Parts A & B

February 6-8, 2004; Saginaw/Bay City, MI

#### Parts B & C

February 27-29, 2004; Lansing, MI

#### Parts A & B

March 13-15, 2004; Novi, MI

#### Parts A & B

April 23-25, 2004; Big Rapids, MI

Contact Shannon Pavwoski at (517) 373-2492 or via email at [pavwoskis@michigan.gov](mailto:pavwoskis@michigan.gov).

### Michigan Collaborative Early Childhood Conference

January 21-23, 2004; Dearborn, MI

For more information, call 517-373-8483.

### MHSA Annual Early Childhood Education Conference

February 26-27, 2004

Kellogg Conference Center, E. Lansing, MI

Contact Lesley Phillip at (517) 374-6472, or [lesley@mhsa.ws](mailto:lesley@mhsa.ws).

### Michigan AEYC Early Childhood Conference

March 25-27, 2004; Grand Rapids, MI

Call 888-666-2392 or email [conference@MiAEYC.org](mailto:conference@MiAEYC.org).

### UP AEYC 2004 UP Early Childhood Conference

April 1-2, 2004; Northern Michigan University

Contact Judy Place, at (906) 226-9904.

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